

UPDATE SATURDAY 26 JANUARY 2002

Laingsburg Flood remembered.

This past week saw the 21st anniversary of the Laingsburg flood, which hit this quiet Karoo town after a massive cloudburst in the upstream catchment area of the normally dry Buffels River.

More than 100 people lost their lives during this freak flood and caused millions of Rand damage.

This was also my first experience of the usefulness of Amateur Radio equipment in an emergency situation. At that time I was still restricted to CW operation as this flood came halfway through the 12 month period I had to spend on CW communication. But immediately after that, I became a member of Hamnet and subsequently became involved in many emergencies.

What also transpired from this event was that one of the senior people from the Cape Town Metro, subsequently sat for his Amateur license, as he became aware of the immense benefit that long distance communication via Amateur Radio had in times of a real emergency.

His name escapes me now, but many others also became Hamnet members after this disaster.

Again we are reminded that disasters can strike at any time and one can never become too complacent. The rainy season is not over and anything can still happen.

Cyclone Dina.

We became aware of this Cyclone during the latter half of last week and a careful eye was kept on her progress south. She did have some effect on Mauritius and bypassed Madagascar and eventually headed east out to sea.

There are 2 other depressions developing in the Indian Ocean and we will keep you informed as to how they develop. At this stage they have not been allocated names, merely a number. The Maritime Mobile Unit down on the South Coast is monitoring their movement and development.

UPDATE SUNDAY 20 JANUARY 2002

Handbook on disaster communication.

During the latter half of last year, I mentioned the work being done on the International Telecommunication Union Handbook on disaster communications. The wait is over.

A copy of this book was given to me on Saturday during the League Council meeting. I have as yet not had time to study this manual, simply because it is a rather hefty book, but from glancing through the table of contents, it is an extremely well prepared book with a tremendous amount of information.

What I intend doing over the next few weeks, is to go through the manual and highlight into bulletin format, some of the items that appear within this book.

What also needs to be done, is that Leslie Lambie, ZS6AKI, will have to meet sometime in the not too distant future, so we can compare notes with our existing Hamnet manual, and possibly bring it in line with the I.T.U manual.

More will follow.

Extreme weather conditions.

We had an extremely heavy thundershower late yesterday afternoon, which went accompanied with a lot of electrical activity. The end result was the flooding of Kagiso, a township southwest of Krugersdorp, Mogwase City, but at this time we have not had any reports of fatalities.

The rainy season is still very much with us and we should be aware that flooding can still occur in many part of the country.

Volcano eruption in Central Africa.

Our other concern at present is the volcano which has been erupting the Democratic Republic of the Congo, or to be more specific, the city of Goma, which lies in the east of the country and borders on Rwanda. Already refugees are streaming across the border with Rwanda for food and shelter and parts of Goma have been completely destroyed.

We are monitoring the situation at present.

Search & rescue exercise.

I have had some ideas from one Regional Director regarding the search & rescue exercise scheduled for later this year. If you have not put pen to paper, please let me have your ideas as soon as possible, so we can submit the ideas to the Sub committee of the organization organizing the exercise.

HAMNET BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY 6 JANUARY 2002 COMPILED AND
PREPARED BY FRANCOIS ZS6BUU

IN THE BULLETIN TODAY

Bulletins around the country S. A. Search & Rescue Exercise December Holiday
season Dates to remember Current Emergencies around the world New Hazchem
logos News from around the country

HAMNET BULLETINS AROUND THE COUNTRY

Sunday morning kicks off with Hamnet KZN at 07H15 on their local VHF
repeaters with a relay on 7.070Mhz by Wally ZS5WP.

Followed with the national Bulletin on 10,130Mhz in the 30M band with a relay
on 7.070Mhz by Martin ZS6MSG. In Gauteng, 145,700Mhz is also used for a
local transmission. The time is 17h00 local.

Next we have Gauteng North. Their bulletin runs from 18H00 local on 145.725Mhz with a relay on 3,650MHz or 7.090MHz by Rudie ZS6DX.

North West Province have a club bulletin on Mondays, which includes a Hamnet segment at 19H00 local on 3,750Mhz in the 80M band as well as their local repeater on 145.737.5Mhz.

Last but not least is Hamnet Western Cape Province with a bulletin on Wednesdays at 20H30 local on 3,674 relayed by Matt ZS1MJJ in the 80M band and on their local repeaters, 145:625Mhz, 145:700Mhz, 145:750Mhz and various other links.

Whatever you missed please access the S.A.R.L. Website under the heading “Hamnet News regularly updated”, for the latest news or if you are on Packet, it will have been sent to you thanks to Rudie ZS6DX.

S. A. SEARCH & RESCUE EXERCISE

On 11 December last year, Jan Schubart ZS6ARV and myself attended the annual S.A.R.S.A. Sub Committee meeting in Pretoria.

I did mention this briefly in an earlier bulletin and also e- mailed all Provincial Directors regarding ideas and suggestions for a pending exercise, which will take place later this year.

As this was my first encounter with the Sub Committee, I was pleasantly surprised at the informal yet firm manner in which the meeting was conducted by the chairperson, Mr. Arthur Bradshaw.

It also became very clear that the Search & Rescue unit, depend very heavily on the availability of Amateur Radio operators in times of a national emergency and that Hamnet forms an integral part of that emergency structure.

This is a good time to remind all Hamnet members, current and pending. Being part of Hamnet and being involved in an emergency call-up should not be taken lightly. Lives are at stake and your preparedness, efficiency and professionalism either in the field as a field station or at home as a net controller, can be a very serious and demanding operation and full commitment is essential.

I still need to forward to them a full updated listing of all the current Provincial Directors around the country and they were pleased to hear that the Hamnet Database has been modified and upgraded to meet any emergency.

DECEMBER HOLIDAY SEASON

The summer holidays are almost over. The majority of holidaymakers have most probably returned home by now, however, there are still two weekends to go before all returns to normal if one can call it that.

The newly opened freeway between Heidelberg and Villiers has proved to be a benefit for the travelers returning from Durban and the South Coast albeit at an extra charge of R17.

Minor roads are still deteriorating some rapidly. Should you still be unsure of a route you wish to travel, please phone the Arrive Alive toll free number 0800 005 619 for up to date information.

We again thank those who spent a lot of time listening for traffic on 7.070. Your efforts are appreciated.

DATES TO REMEMBER

I have received a list of Contest dates for the year 2002. There are some dates that you may wish to diarise.

The year kicks off with the SARL HF field day from 9th to 10th of March.

Next we have the SARL Hamnet 40-metre Simulated Emergency Contest. This takes place on the 14th of April and is an excellent opportunity to set up either a mobile station or a field station to test your preparedness and equipment.

Another contest, which also is useful from a communication point of view, is the SARL HF Phone contest on the 4th of August 2002.

All rules will be available from the SARL Website at www.sarl.org.za

CURRENT EMERGENCIES AROUND THE WORLD

We are very fortunate to be living in South Africa, especially when it comes to natural and political disasters.

We are aware of flooding, fires and tornados currently in our country, but looking at the list of other countries where natural and other disasters are current, the list is mind blowing.

There are 22 countries at present with some sort of an emergency on the go. The most recent being the floods in South America, which had prominence on TV a few days ago.

The bush fires in Australia, which is threatening many thousands of residents and countless homes.

ARES Amateur Radio Emergency Services in America have had their hand full over the last few weeks not forgetting the massive effort by so many operators after the 11th September attack in New York.

What almost went un-noticed is the massive earthquake, which hit the Vanuatu Islands on January 3rd this year.

A report from Port Vila, indicated an earthquake measuring 7.3 on the Richter scale, hit the tiny Pacific nation of Vanuatu on Thursday but Islanders escaped with their lives despite bridges buckling and roads collapsing.

The epicentre of the quake was 50 kilometers west of Port Vila, which bore the brunt of the violent shaking. Rocks, the size of houses, cut the wharf in the port in half and barges may have to be used to offload cargo from ships.

To crown it all, in June last year, Vanuatu was without food and water for 4 days as the volcano, Lopevi, spewed out a thick blanket of ash covering the remote Island of Paama and destroying crops.

Vanuatu is situated near New Zealand. This is an area prone to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

We can be grateful that this country is not subjected to some of the problems we see and hear about in other parts of the world.

NEW HAZCHEM LOGOS

It has been brought to my attention by Jan ZS6ARV and confirmed by Keith ZS5WFD, that a new set of Hazkem signs have been introduced.

At the time of going to press, details of the new format are not immediately available but more will be discussed at a later stage as the information becomes available.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

Apart from listening to the various bulletins, should there be news from your area for the main bulletin, please send your contributions to either jans@netdial.co.za or francois@overflow.co.za.

Contributions are always welcome and it also supplements the Sunday get together on 10,130 and 7,070. It also helps to add some spice to the regular Sunday bulletin.

Bulletin Ends